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Los Angeles City Councilman David Ryu
City Hall 200 N. Spring St. Rm. 425
Los Angeles, CA, 90012

May 29, 2020

Dear Councilman Ryu,

I am writing in support of any legislation that will put an end to live animal markets in Los Angeles. I have visited these markets. They are unsanitary, unregulated and inhumane. Animal slaughter has always been zoned in this community for a reason: disease control, humane treatment of food animals, and avoidance of scenes traumatic for young children. Americans rely on slaughter of animals for food but they also overwhelmingly support that it be done humanely.

Slaughter zoning laws have been part of our legal traditions since the time of Upton Sinclair. Enforcing these laws has always been problematic because of the political power of the people who see live animal markets as part of their cultural tradition. Culture is important for self-esteem and personal identity, but people who come here enjoy the benefits of many of our traditions. Should they not be willing to leave some of their traditions in their countries of origin. We don't tolerate the eating of dogs and cats, Californians no longer allow the slaughter of horses for food. American has a long tradition of the humane treatment of animals—even those that are our food choices.

I am not anti-immigrant. We are all Immigrants. Immigrants are the life blood of our economy. Only they are willing to work at the jobs that more established Americans eschew. Immigrants built our railroads, immigrants worked our mines, immigrants tend our fields, care for our children and clean our living spaces. They do that for the opportunity to live in America. But I believe that America has the right to expect them to leave certain traditions behind e.g. clitorrectomy, human trafficking, blood killings. Assimilation has always involved the acquisition of certain traditions and the relinquishment of others.

Today those issues are even more critical, emerging zoonotic infections are coming from concentrated animal confinement and animal markets. The current pandemic has destroyed our economy. More such viral epidemics are on the way. Let's make sure that the City of Los Angeles is never the source of such world-wide suffering and economic collapse.

Sincerely,

Richard McLellan